

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-3, 6, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), claims 8-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), and claim 4 is objected to. Claims 1, 8, 19, and 20 are amended, and claim 4 is canceled. The rejections are respectfully traversed in light of the following remarks, and reconsideration is requested.

Objected to Claim

The Examiner has indicated that claim 4 has allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In particular, claim 4 recites an "air" gap between the planar surface of the lens and the fiber face of about 10 microns or less.

Claim 1 is amended to recite the limitations of claim 4. Thus, claim 1 is now allowable. Claim 4 has been canceled.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 103(a)

Claims 1-3 and 5-20 were rejected as being unpatentable over Raguin et al. (20020131699) and Kanazawa (US 6,179,483).

Claim 1 is now allowable, as discussed above.

Claims 2, 3, and 5-7 depend on claim 1 and are thus allowable.

Independent claim 8 has been amended to recite "an air gap between the planar surface of the lens and a fiber end face is about 10 microns or less." Independent claim 19 has been amended to recite that a "planar side of the lens has an air gap of about 10 microns or less to a fiber end face." Independent claim 20 has been amended to recite "an air gap between a

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planar side of the lens and a fiber end face is about 10 microns or less." Thus, for reasons similar to claim 1, claims 8, 19, and 20 are believed patentable over the cited references.

Claims 9-18 depend on claim 8 and are thus also allowable.

Applicants believe that the minor amendments to claims 8, 19, and 20, namely just the addition of "air" before "gap" should be entered, as no new search is required and the limitation was previously presented and found allowable by the Examiner in claim 4.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments to claims 1, 8, 10, and 20 under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(a) because the amendments place the claims in condition for allowance without adding new matter or requiring any additional search by the Examiner.

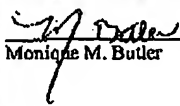
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-3 and 5-20.

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CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe pending claims 1-3 and 5-20 are allowable, and a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned Attorney at (949) 752-7040.

Certification of Facsimile Transmission	
I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on the date shown below.	
 Monique M. Butler	March 15, 2005 Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,


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